

Themes Inherent in the Text

To Kill a Mockingbird | Harper Lee

Theme. A theme is a main idea that an author is trying to reveal through a piece of writing. While **prejudice** is a theme, it is a very broad term. You will need to be more specific in your identification of themes. For example, a theme might be: *Racial prejudice as demonstrated by ...* This gives me an idea of what kind of prejudice is inherent in the novel. Below, I have given you broad themes. In the chart, be more specific and elaborate on the broad themes provided.

The narrator or another character state some themes directly in the novel:

Courage . “I wanted you to see what real courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand.”

Empathy . “You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view—until you climb into his [or her] skin and walk around in it.”

Insight . “Most people are [nice]...when you finally see them.”

Persecution . “It’s a sin to kill a mockingbird...[they] don’t do one thing but make music for us to enjoy.” In other words, it’s a sin to persecute someone who has done no harm but only good.

Other themes implied indirectly:

- **End of Innocence** Growing up usually brings with it an end of innocence.
- **Educational Shortcomings** Educational practices often achieve the opposite result from that intended.
- **Hypocrisy in Adults** Adults are often hypocritical.
- **Don’t Judge a Book by Its Cover** Appearance is often different from reality.
- **Happiness in Belonging** Children must feel needed to be happy.
- **Childhood Clarity** Children, with fewer prejudices, sometimes see the truth more clearly than adults.
- **Contentment** “Fine folks” are those people who do the best they can with what they have.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Period: _____

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Directions: Follow five themes from the previous page and then fill in the chart accordingly.

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Summary of Scene That Supports Your Theme</u>	<u>Direct Quotes from Text That Support Your Theme</u>
Theme #1		
Theme #2		

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Summary of Scene That Supports Your Theme</u>	<u>Direct Quotes from Text That Support Your Theme</u>
Theme #3		
Theme #4		
Theme #5		